1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

Aug. 6.th 1940 We start for Lakes.
Aug. 7.th 1940 [John Keats] meet us on trail.

. . . . . .

Aug. 25.th 1940 We go to mountain for shap [sheep].
Aug. 26.th 1940 We stay at the mountain yet.
Aug. 27.th 1940 We go down to Lake.
Aug. 28.th 1940 Old Man [Wiley] and me and [Billy Barre] hunt moose Kill one moose.
Aug. 29.th 1940 I kill two Bull moose. and We goe home, for the camp.

Young people occasionally make photographic records with simple folding or box cameras; these are generally pictures of friends and relatives. The films are mailed to large cities for developing and printing. Great pleasure is found in looking at photographs, even after they have been seen many times before. Informants were also pleased to show a copy of the *National Geographic Magazine*, for May 1942, containing the record of the Albees' trip through the Upper Liard River valley and showing pictures of both deceased and living people.[14]

People communicate from one bank of a river to another by shouting; young men may also whistle. In the bush two smoke fires are said to be the signal for distress. Generally, if a person becomes lost in the bush, he fires a large caliber rifle and then waits for an answer. If he is injured, he may fire a number of shots in quick succession. Between winter settlements located as many as eight miles apart, gun fire is sometimes used for signaling.

In winter, if anyone leaves a settlement for a visit to the trading post, he is sure to be given messages to the storemen requesting additional supplies and a small increase in credit. These messages are usually laboriously pencilled by someone who can write, verbal messages being ignored by traders unless accompanied by cash. Notes are sometimes left at cabins when the occupants go away. Such notes commonly explain the reason for leaving and give the destination of the occupants.[15] Ordinarily Indians have little occasion to write letters. When they wish to do so, help is usually solicited from the independent trader in Lower Post.

Visitors between winter settlements, or in summer, from other parts of the area, disseminate news. Such transmission generally occurs at informal gatherings, perhaps while the visitor is refreshing himself with a cup of tea. News circulated in this way includes accounts of illness, death, luck in hunting, and the progress of house construction, as well as the activities of traders and other white people. Such accounts very rarely contain personal items unfavorable to a subject, gossip of this kind being either suppressed or withheld for more intimate occasions.

Property

Among the Kaska Indians, property—that is, those social relationships controlling the use and alienation of some subject matter[16]—tends to be of relatively little importance.

[14] Albee and Albee, *Family Afoot in the Yukon Wilds* (1942).

[15] Albee and Albee, *Family Afoot in the Yukon Wilds* (1942), 650. The specimen note given by the authors is very similar to ones which we encountered three years later.

[16] Murdock, et. al., *Outline of Cultural Materials* (1945), 24.

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

The things, around which property relations revolve, are quantitatively slight and qualitatively of little intrinsic value. Associated with these conditions, is the fact that interpersonal adjustments with reference to the subject matter of property have not been rigorously formalized. In recent years, however, the accumulation of stores of purchased winter food and capital goods has increased. One result of this accumulation may be seen in the conflict between such divergent property conceptions as loose personal control and strict private ownership. It is apparent that the growing amount of material goods is making the absence of concepts of strict personal control disturbing. We are therefore probably dealing with a transition period, in which property conceptions are becoming more rigorously formulated and ideas of strict personal ownership gaining in importance. These points should be borne in mind in reading the following material.

As near as could be learned, the subject matter of property includes the land but stops short of the fauna that pass over the land. The control of land, however, gives the owner the exclusive right to kill fur bearing animals on his territory but is less explicit about conferring exclusive privileges of killing game animals and birds. In one case, Old Kean protested when a white man announced his intention of hunting moose on the former's trap line, but generally little attention is paid to where a man hunts or fishes so long as he restricts trapping to his own territory. Ownership does not usually include the flora unless it has been affected by the owner's labor. Thus dried trees are ideally recognized as belonging to the person who killed them, although others do use such wood for fuel. Property is not extended to include spouses or children; a person may express authority over children but he would not claim to owning them.

All property is conceived of as privately owned. Ownership confers certain powers over the subject matter of property, including ideal control over permanent alienation and use. This ideal control indicates that the owner has the right to refuse the loan or transfer of his property in case of another's need. Manifestly, however, this right is restricted. The closer property relations involve the members of a settlement, the more limited is a man's control over the use of his property. Different categories of property are variously correlated with the right of use or access by others. Capital goods are probably most highly correlated in this respect; personal objects, like clothes, least; and grub, intermediately. Implicitly, the owner recognizes that his ownership fails to give him full power of control, so long as others lack and need his possessions. Often refusal to transfer needed objects is indirect; the owner may beg that he does not have what is needed. Such indirect refusal to lend further points to recognition of the limited control which is actually exercised over many possessions. There are, however, thick-skinned individuals who refuse to acknowledge the unformalized right of others to use their property and who, directly, strive to maintain full control. Such people are disliked and are branded as stingy or cranky. It is interesting that such people often try to defend their action, as though recognizing the lack of social support for their behavior. It must be pointed out that few people acknowledge their limited control willingly or generously. Conversely, most people never strongly express their right to use another's property.

A few examples of property relations may clarify these principles. Old Kean said one day that he had almost three year's supply of food at his place. He added with unconcealed

1: Honigmann E-5 (1943-1945) 1949 ND12 Nahane ND12

422 ●421 annoyance: "All winter people I feed." Chronically this man complained of his sons' thefts. He was widely regarded as cranky and ungenerous. Similarly Old Man told the ethnographer that he didn't want to buy too large a supply of dog feed. If he did, he said, his sons-in-law would feel too free to use it. Light was thrown on attitudes toward too exclusive control 423 421 of property when Leonard Dick stayed a night in Mrs. Dickson's unoccupied cabin in Lower Post. The next day he moved out and into a tent, despite the fact that his son was ill. We asked Old Man why Leonard did this. Old Man replied: "Maybe he hear kick coming. That's why he move out. Hard to get around that woman. She's mean . . . Anybody come around his place, she grab ax." The following day Old Man commented: "Some people pretty bad. Kick about it if you use their cabin or stuff winter time in bush. We do it just the same."

423 The principal forms of real property are land, houses, and caches. Each family head may be regarded as owning his trap line, a piece of territory varying in size from about two hundred to five hundred square miles. In British Columbia these trapping areas have been clearly mapped for each individual and the ownership is registered. Here trap lines are relatively small. In the Yukon, however, registered trap lines have not yet been introduced and considerably more confusion pertains to the boundaries of such a territory. Disputes over limits are not infrequent in the Yukon and, when these are called to the attention of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, they are generally adjudicated by fixing some waterway as the boundary. It is rare for such questions to be referred to the police. Generally a man who feels that his trapping privileges are being infringed upon remains content to complain to his friends and to gossip unfavorably about the infringer. There is apparently no severe shortage of trapping ground and most trap lines are far from completely exploited. Trap lines are owned by men with only two exceptions noted. In these two cases women received their lines from husbands.

Use of a trap line is freely granted to all the members of the owner's primary family and may also be apportioned among a man's younger brothers and, temporarily, to a partner. Following marriage of a daughter and matrilocal residence by a son-in-law, the head of the household assigns an area of the trapping territory for the use of the young man. A son-in-law refers to this area as "mine," and only when pressed will he recognize the fact that final ownership is still invested in his father-in-law.

Houses are built by men, but their ownership is theoretically vested in woman. Tents also belong to women; they are sometimes manufactured by women but may also be pur- [177] chased by men. River Joe, who is part Taku Indian (a tribe which has probably been more strongly influenced by coastal Indian attitudes than the Kaska), expressed an atypical conception of house ownership when he indicated that houses may be linked through female relatives. Thus his house, which was owned by his deceased wife (a member of the Wolf moiety) was said to be linked to the house which his son-in-law, Louis Maza, had built and transferred to his wife (also a Wolf). Both houses were "just the same," River Joe affirmed.

422 Movable property includes all items of capital goods, meat, grub, skins, vehicles, clothes, and other personal belongings. Children are not regarded as owning property until they approach maturity. "Children got nothing," Old Man said. "Just they eat. When full grown, they have their own stuff. They get money from daddy or sometimes they good trappers and pick up their own stuff." A child's money is its own, even when held by